

How and Why Corporations Evaluate Sponsored “Sports for Peace” Projects

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Since the United Nations named 2005 the international year of Sports and Physical education, the field of Sports for Peace research has been attracting ever increasing academic interest. Yet, one of the recommendations that resulted from the 2nd International Forum on Sport for Peace and Development, that was held at the United Nations office in Geneva on 10th and 11th of May 2011, was a call for the strengthening of evaluation tools on the impact of sport and for interdisciplinary research to develop scientific evidence and good practices. However, considering the rich and complex nature of both sports and peace, will first need to identify and then focus on the subtle nuances of how sports may contribute to peace. And since most sports for peace agencies, like the Open Fun Football School that has been operating in Bosnia-Herzegovina since 1998, receive funding from large corporations such as Statoil, Socar and Unicredit, examining the sponsor/sports for peace agency relationship may be a promising avenue for providing more insight on the sports for peace construct. A literature review, that covers four concepts related to how and why corporations evaluate sponsored sports for peace projects, was conducted as a pertinent first step to help identify key ideas that may impact future research. Based on the reviewed literature, and on key peacemaking theory, a conceptual model which crystalizes our understanding of how sports for peace agency relationships may influence peace building was constructed. This model demonstrates that the evaluating of outcomes and impacts of sports for peace projects will be relative and will not only depend on which relationship we study, but also on which point of view we choose to examine the relationship. It also causes us to reflect that these points of view may be influenced by broad reaching discourse on the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and on the potential of sports for peace. Finally, we recommend that more research is needed on how and why each stakeholder monitors and

evaluates the outcomes and impacts of their particular sports for peace relationships, and that focusing specifically on how and why corporations evaluated their sponsored sports for peace projects on the ground may be a promising avenue of research to contribute to the UN's call for more insight into the sports for peace and development construct.

Keywords: Peace, Sport, Sports for Peace, Corporate Social Responsibility.